

Special Advertisements.

The most awkward part of Mr. Service's new Constitution is that which provides for the elimination from an Appropriation Bill of anything which the Council may wish to set aside for separate treatment. The ordinary manner in which the Council expresses its objection is by amending a bill that is before it; but Mr. SERVICE wishes to get over the technical difficulty of allowing the Council to amend an Appropriation Bill, and therefore proposes that its wishes should be indicated to the Assembly beforehand. This undoubtedly an awkward arrangement, it violates the customary notion of each House is ignorant of the members of the other, and the members of the other are ignorant of the members of this House, except so far as formally made acquainted with it. The Appropriation Bill, Mr. SERVICE says, is generally the last measure of the session, and if the amendments of the Council were to be postponed till it was in possession of the bill, the session might be inconveniently prolonged. All this difficulty arises from keeping up forms with reference to Appropriation Bills which are now

tile better than superstition. There
 as a reason for the House of
 Commons withholding supply till the King
 redressed certain grievances. The
 representatives of the people were fighting
 with needy kings for the liberties of the
 people, and it was fortunate that they were
 able to purchase those liberties for hard cash.
 The King wanted money, the people wanted
 liberty, and they struck their bargain for
 some time. If any grand theorist, or
 revolutionary Republican, thinks that this
 is an undignified way of creating a Con-
 stitution, the answer is that it was peaceful,
 and that it was gradual, and that it was successful.
 It left no after-claps of unpleasant reaction,
 and every step that was gained was kept.
 But we have now passed the stage at which
 the chaffer with the monarch about money,
 and liberties are no longer bought and paid
 for in coin. We no longer haggle with royal
 prerogatives, and say, "my cash calls for my
 liberties." The Sovereign is no longer a
 constitutional system, but the real adminis-
 trative power rests with the Cabinet, and the
 legislative power resides in the Parlia-
 ment. The taxes are raised and spent by

who are responsible for every fraction of the expenditure, and who are bound or to spend it only and exactly as Parliament has pre-arranged. The Estimates, and the Ways and Means are practically one financial policy. Parliament never votes any revenue away from its disposal. The Appropriation Bill, therefore, is no longer any check upon a Sovereign, the public service is not defrayed by the monarch or his representative, who is now little more than a formal party to it. The money substantially voted for the use of the Government, and the Government is virtually the people, represented first by Parliament and then by the Ministry. The reason for keeping the Appropriation Bill back is no longer as a check upon the Sovereign, but as a check upon the Ministry. A Ministry that is in danger might prorogue or dissolve Parliament before Parliament wishes it, and it is simply a check upon its own servants that Parliament keeps the Appropriation Bill in hand. It would not be difficult, however, to provide a check in another way, and there would certainly be advantages in having the Estimates laid still earlier than the end of the

The manner of treating open questions in Cabinet is a little perplexing just now to the Government of Victoria. The payment of members is a point on which members, past, present, and future, feel very keenly, and even in the new House there are a goodly number who are much more anxious about the immediate settlement of this question than about the Reform Bill itself. The Cabinet is divided over it. Some of its members are weary, and then hurried through the subject without serious consideration and passed in this manner. Considering how very large our expenditure is in proportion to the population, it ought to be revised very carefully, and our method of procedure is certainly not one that secures both a comprehensive and minute criticism of it. It is a part of the Parliamentary system which is capable of decided improvement, and when economy of expenditure and a fair distribution of that expenditure becomes more urgent than it has been of late, the necessity for making some change may be forced upon us.

members have always been in favour of paid legislators, others have always been opposed to them; and in the formation of the Ministry it was always understood that this should be an open question. But then a difficulty arose, namely, who should introduce the bill. Mr. Spence, though against the measure, says he is willing to bow to a clear expression of the will of the majority, and there is a majority in favour of payment, though those who take that view do not all comply as to the proper sum to grant. Mr. Spence has still further agreed that he will comply with a resolution of the House, and introduce a bill, and he has already brought in the preliminary message. But if he introduces a bill and submits it to the House, he virtually asks the House for its assent, while at the same time he does not approve the proposal and does not mean to vote in favour of it. The consequence of this awkward arrangement will be that we shall have a Minister proposing clause after clause against which he will speak and vote, and this is not very consistent with Ministerial dignity or Ministerial responsibility. As the measure cannot be

duced as a Ministerial measure, and coming under the weight of the united authority of the Cabinet, it would be a better plan to let one member of the Ministry who does not divide in the policy introduce it. He could move it, and with a clear conscience, and the House to support it. Those who desire the bill do not much care how it is passed so long as it is passed; and at the same time some respect is shown to the principle of Constitutional forms. In more those forms have a distinct and a more clearly meaning the better. It is a backward step when we empty them of their significance, and it is a still further step backwards when we make them hypocritical.

It seems unavoidable that we should have such questions. There are so many debatable questions, and there is so much freedom of opinion, that it is difficult out of a small number to select half-a-dozen men fit to be spokesmen who will agree on all the questions on which Parliament may be called to pronounce. Sometimes such questions may be avoided, but sometimes they cannot. The

(BY OUR SPECIAL REPORTER.)

(FROM OUR OWN REPORTER.)

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